

School Health Form (“Blue Form”) Revised

The Virginia Department of Health (VDH), in collaboration with the Virginia Chapter of the AAP, Department of Education, and other stakeholders, has revised the form used to document the physical examination for entry into public kindergarten and elementary school. The form is also widely used by providers of childcare, Head Start, Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI), and Infant and Toddler Connection (Part C Early Intervention) services.

The *Code of Virginia* requires documentation of a comprehensive physical examination done by a licensed physician, nurse practitioner, or physician assistant. The exam must be completed no longer than one year before school entry. The physical examination is required to protect the public from spread of communicable disease, and to identify physical, social-emotional, or developmental needs the child has so that (1) the school can begin to prepare to assist those needs and (2) necessary interventions can be initiated to maximize the child’s school readiness.

As before, the form is divided into three parts: Part I documents the child’s health history, and is to be completed by the parent or other adult responsible for the child; Part II documents the immunization history; Part III documents the comprehensive physical exam. The content of the comprehensive exam is based on *Bright Futures Guidelines for Health Supervision of Infants, Children, and Adolescents*. Wherever possible, the documentation meets expectations for Early Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment (EPSDT) requirements. The new form is designed to emphasize the outcomes of various screenings, with a strong focus on a developmental approach to well-child care, as consistent with AAP policy.

The form has been streamlined to maximize the use of check boxes. For example, checking the boxes for “age/gender appropriate history” and “anticipatory guidance provided” indicates that these tasks have been completed without requiring further detail. The results of hearing, vision, and dental screens are similarly summarized using check boxes. Providers are expected to document those findings that have resulted in referring the child/parent for further evaluation or treatment. Abnormal findings can be expanded on in the “Recommendations” section.

Screening for age appropriate development is a critical component of well-child care and is integral to identifying children who may need assistance in the school or other structured environment. The established standard of well-child care recognizes the use of a tool for assessing development. Examples of tools that have been validated and found to be efficient for use in provider offices include: Parent’s Evaluation of Developmental Skills (PEDS), Ages and Sages Questionnaires (ASQ), Child Development Inventories (CDI). Bright Futures milestones are also used in such screening, and represent an acceptable method to note.

The “Recommendations” section is the clinician’s opportunity to summarize findings of note for the personnel receiving and reviewing the completed form. Specific areas include allergies, care plans needed, dietary needs, physical activity limitations or accommodations, and developmental status.

Since the intent of the school entry physical exam is to protect the public health and assist the school in preparing for the needs of the individual child, Part I, Part II and, at minimum, the “Recommendations” section of Part III must be completed in full in order for a child to be admitted to school without delay. Local school divisions may require other components. School or other program personnel will contact health care professionals about forms where required sections are incomplete.

Detailed instructions on completing the form are available on line at:
<http://www.vahealth.org/schoolhealth/publications.asp>

Web-based continuing education modules on **current** Bright Futures and EPSDT standards are accessible at www.vcu-cme.org/bf. Revisions to the content of this training are in process to accommodate the new release of Bright Futures later in 2007.

Questions can be directed to the Virginia Department of Health, Division of Child and Adolescent Health at 804.864.7685.